Louisiana State University
Political Science 2060, Section 1: *Introduction to Political Theory*

Summer 2013; Monday-Friday: 1:20-2:20 PM

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<tr>
<th>Instructor: Eric Schmidt</th>
<th>Office: 334 Stubbs Hall</th>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:escm13@lsu.edu">escm13@lsu.edu</a></td>
<td>Office Hours: M-F After Class, and by appointment</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Department of Political Science office &amp; instructor’s mailbox are located in 240 Stubbs Hall</td>
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“Man is a mystery: if you spend your entire life trying to puzzle it out, then do not say that you have wasted your time. I occupy myself with this mystery, because I want to be a man.” – Fyodor Dostoevsky

**Course Description:** This course is intended as an introduction to political philosophy as seen through an examination of some of the major texts and thinkers of the Western political tradition. Three broad themes that are central to understanding political life are focused upon: the classical/Christian experience (Plato, Aristotle, Augustine), the rise of liberalism (Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau), and democracy in America (The Federalist, Tocqueville). The way in which different political philosophies have given expression to various forms of political institutions and our ways of life are examined throughout the course.

This course is approved for general education credit in the social sciences and so is designed to convey an understanding of factors associated with global interdependence, including economic, political, psychological, cultural and linguistic forces. According to the LSU catalogue, “General education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; rather, they are means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world. Their primary aim is to educate rather than train, and to instill a desire for life-long learning.”

**Required Texts:**


Recommended Texts: (Note that these texts are limited to those whose authors wrote in English. Yet, if possible, the student should endeavor to obtain these copies which were selected as outstanding editions.)


Course assignments and requirements:

Participation:

Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Good note taking is absolutely essential. Class participation and attendance are important and roll will be taken. Students should come to class with their assignment read (with a copy of the reading!) and should be prepared to ask as well as answer questions.

Reading Summaries:

On four separate occasions, students will bring to class and turn in a typed, one-page, single-spaced summary of the reading for the day. Each summary is worth 5% of the final grade.

A good reading summary should detail the major ideas and themes of that day’s reading. The student should be able to communicate clearly the main point(s) the author is attempting to make. Students should also provide references and limited quotations to back up their claims, and adhere to the rules of good grammar and economy of style.

Reading Questions:

On four separate occasions (and not on the same day as a reading summary), students will come up with 10 questions about the reading of that day. A good question will consist of an explanatory sentence to set up a question
which is directly related to the reading. Students should also give citations, and a diversity of questions to reflect that they have read the entire assignment. Each set of reading questions is 5% of the final grade.

Reading questions and summaries are due at the beginning of class. Students may do NO MORE THAN 2 sets of questions or summaries in a given week, and are encouraged to do the assignments as early as possible in order to get feedback. Late assignments will be marked down a grade.

Exams:

Two exams, a Midterm and a Final will be given in this course. They will involve a choice of short answer essay questions, and notes will not be allowed. Absences and exemptions from exams can only be made with prior notification and approval, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students are expected to adhere to the University Code of Conduct, which can be located at http://saa.lsu.edu/code-student-conduct. Violators will be referred immediately to the Dean of Students. During exams, all electronic devices must be turned off and put away.

A NOTE ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES: while the use of laptops for note taking is not currently forbidden in this course, it is strongly discouraged. I reserve the right to change this policy if I perceive that the presence of laptops is causing a general disturbance in the classroom. Screens tend to cause distractions, not only for those immediately in front of them, but also for everyone else seated in range of view. Phone use in class is expressly forbidden, and repeated infractions of this rule may result in loss of participation points or expulsion from class. Students are expected to be prepared and attentive during each class meeting, and respectful of their classmates and instructor.

Grading:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Summaries</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>4 Reading Questions</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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Grading Scale:

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<th>Grade Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>90%-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>80%-89.9%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70%-79.9%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60%-69.9%</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
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Tentative Course Outline:

I. The Classical Tradition

   June 10th - Introduction
   June 11th - Plato, Apology
   June 12th - Plato, Crito
June 13th - Plato, Republic, Book I
June 14th - Plato, Republic, Book IV
June 17th - Plato, Republic, Book V
June 18th - Plato, Republic, Books VIII-IX
June 19th - Aristotle, Ethics, Book I
June 20th - Aristotle, Ethics, Book V
June 21st - Aristotle, Ethics, Book VIII-IX
June 24th - Aristotle, Politics, Book I
June 25th - Aristotle, Politics, Book IV
June 26th - Aristotle, Politics, Book VII
June 27th - Augustine, City of God, 2.20-22, 4.3-21
June 28th - Augustine, City of God 5.24-26, 14.28, 15.1-5
July 1st - Augustine, City of God 19.5-22
July 2nd - Midterm

II. The Rise of Liberalism

July 3rd - Machiavelli, The Prince, 1-12
July 4th – No Class
July 5th Machiavelli, The Prince, 13-26
July 8th Hobbes, Leviathan, 6, 13-15
July 9th Hobbes, Leviathan, 17-19
July 10th Hobbes, Leviathan, 21, 24, 26
July 11th Locke, Second Treatise, 2, 5
July 12th Locke, Second Treatise, 7, 8
July 15th Locke, Second Treatise, 9-13
July 16th Locke, Second Treatise, 18, 19
July 17th Rousseau, Social Contract, Book I
July 18th Rousseau, Social Contract, Book II

July 19th Rousseau, Social Contract, Book III

July 22nd Rousseau, Social Contract, Book IV

III. Democracy in America

July 23rd Federalist Papers (Wootton), 1, 10, 14-15

July 24th Federalist Papers (Wootton), 47-52


July 26th Tocqueville, Democracy in America, pp. 274-302, 426-28, 479-84, 485-88 (Mansfield and Winthrop)

July 29th Tocqueville, Democracy in America, pg. 500-08, 535-39, 589-99, 661-65, 673-76 (Mansfield and Winthrop)

LAST CLASS: Monday, July 29th

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, August 1st, 10:00-Noon